THE JEWS.

(A COMEDY IN ONE ACT.)

The 'Jews' was written at Berlin in the year 1749.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MICHEL STICH.

MARTIN KRUMM.

A TRAVELLER.

CHRISTOPH, *his servant.*

The BARON.

A YOUNG LADY, *his daughter.*

LISETTE, *a maid-servant.*

THE JEWS.

Scene I.—Michel Stich, Martin Krumm.

Krumm. You stupid Michel Stich!

Stich. You stupid Martin Krumm!

Krumm. Let's confess we have both been extremely stupid. What would it have mattered, whether we had killed one more, or not?

Stich. And how could we have managed it more prudently? Were we not well disguised? Was not the coachman on our side? and was it our fault that chance played us such a trick? Have I not said many a hundred times, "What infernal luck!" Without luck one cannot even be a good pickpocket.

Krumm. Never mind. If viewed in the right light, we have only escaped the gallows for a few days longer.

Stich. Ah, the devil take the gallows! If all thieves were hung, the gallows would have to stand thicker. One hardly sees one in two miles, and, where there is one, it stands unoccupied. I believe the judges, for politeness' sake, will abolish the things altogether. And what is the use of them, after all? None at all, except at most that, when one of us passes by, he shuts his eyes.

Krumm. Oh, I don't even do that. My father and grandfather died on the gallows; can I ask a better fate? I am not ashamed of my parents.

STICH. But honest people will be ashamed of you. You have not done nearly enough yet for one to recognise their genuine offspring in you.

KRUMM. Don't fancy that our master is going to get off in this way. And I will surely revenge myself, too, on that confounded stranger, who snatched so savoury a morsel from our mouths. His watch he shall leave me, as sure as . . . . Ha! see, there he's coming. Quick, away. I'll now perform my masterpiece.

STICH. But halves, halves!

SCENE II.—MARTIN KRUMM, *the* TRAVELLER.

KRUMM (*aside*). I will play the blockhead. (*Aloud*) Your most obedient servant, sir. I am Martin Krumm, and am the legally appointed bailiff of this property.

TRAV. I believe you, my friend. But have you not seen my servant?

KRUMM. At your service, no. But I have had the honour to hear much good of your honourable person; and I am thus much pleased that I have the honour to enjoy the honour of your acquaintance. I am told that you delivered our master from a very great danger last night. And as I cannot but rejoice at the good fortune of our master, I rejoice——

TRAV. I guess your intention. You wish to thank me for having assisted your master.

KRUMM. Yes; quite right; just so.

TRAV. You are an honest man.

KRUMM. That I am. And honesty is the best policy.

TRAV. It is no small pleasure to me to have obliged so many honest people by so trifling an action. Their gratitude is a more than sufficient reward for what I have done. Love of mankind obliged me to do it. It was my duty, and I could not but have been satisfied if it had been considered nothing more. You are too kind, my dear people, to thank me for any service which, without doubt, you would have rendered as zealously to me, if I had found myself in a similar danger. Can I serve you in anything else, my friend?

KRUMM. Oh! with serving I will not trouble you, sir.

I have my man who waits upon me, when necessary. But .... I should like to know how it happened? Where was it? Were there many thieves? Did they intend to murder our good master, or did they only wish to take his money? The latter would have been better than the former.

Trav. I will tell you the whole incident in a few words. It must be about an hour's walk from here, where the robbers had attacked your master, in a narrow pass. I was journeying along the same road, and his piteous cries for help induced me to hasten towards the spot with my servant.

Krumm. Ah, ah!

Trav. I found him in an open carriage——

Krumm. Ah, ah!

Trav. Two fellows in disguise——

Krumm. Disguised? Ah, ah!

Trav. Were already handling him roughly——

Krumm. Ah, ah!

Trav. Whether they intended to kill him, or only to bind him in order to rob him the more securely, I don't know.

Krumm. Ah, ah! No doubt they intended to kill him, the godless wretches.

Trav. That I will not maintain, lest I might wrong them.

Krumm. Yes, yes, believe me. They wished to kill him. I know, I am quite certain——

Trav. But how can you know it? But let it be so. As soon as the robbers perceived me, they quitted their booty, and escaped as fast as they could into the forest hard by. I discharged my pistol at one of them, but as it was already too dark, and he too far off, I doubt whether I hit him.

Krumm. No; you did not hit him——

Trav. Do you know that?

Krumm. I merely fancy so, because it was already dark, and in the dark, I am told, one cannot aim well.

Trav. I cannot describe to you how grateful your master was to me. He called me his preserver a hundred times, and obliged me to return with him to his country seat. I sincerely wish circumstances would permit me

to remain longer with this amiable man; but as it is, I must proceed on my journey this very day. And it is on that account that I am looking for my servant.

KRUMM. Oh, do not hasten away yet. Stay a few moments longer. Well, what else was I going to ask? The robbers—yes, tell me, what did they look like? How were they dressed? They were disguised; but how?

TRAV. Your master maintains that they were Jews. Beards they had, 'tis true; but their language was the common dialect used among the peasantry here. If they were disguised, as I certainly believe, twilight rendered them a good service. But I don't understand how Jews should be able to make the roads unsafe, since so few of them are suffered to remain in this country.

KRUMM. Yes, yes. I believe, too, they were Jews. You may not be well acquainted with these wicked people yet. All of them, without exception, are cheats, thieves, and robbers. That is why they are a people whom the Lord our God has cursed. If I were king, I should not leave a single one of them alive. Oh, may the Lord guard all honest Christians against these people! If the Lord our God did not hate them, why should twice as many Jews as Christians have perished in the accident at Breslau, a short time ago? Our clergyman very wisely reminded us of this in his last sermon. It seems as if they had been listening to him, and wished to be revenged for this very reason on our good master. Oh! my dear sir, if you desire prosperity and happiness in this world, beware of the Jews, more than of the plague.

TRAV. Would to God that this was only the language of the vulgar!

KRUMM. For example, sir. I was once at a fair .... yes, when I think of that fair, I wish I could poison the cursed Jews all at one stroke. In the crowd they had robbed one of his pocket-handkerchief, another of his snuff-box, a third of his watch, and I don't know what more. They are quick, devilish quick, when a theft is the question; more dexterous than our schoolmaster ever is on his organ. For example, sir, at first they press closely upon you, almost as I do now upon you——

TRAV. Only with a little more politeness, my friend.

Krumm. Oh, let me just show you. Well, when they are standing close by you, do you see, like lightning shoots a hand to your watch-pocket. (*He puts his hand in the coat-pocket instead of the watch-pocket, and takes a snuff-box out of it.*) Well, they do all that so cleverly, that one would swear that the hand goes this way, when in reality it goes that. When they are talking of the snuff-box, they are aiming at the watch; and when they talk of the watch, they have designs on the snuff-box. (*He makes straight for the watch, but is caught.*)

Trav. Stop, stop, what business has your hand here?

Krumm. Well, you may now perceive what a bungling pickpocket I should be. If a Jew had made such an attempt, it would doubtless have been all over with the watch. But I see you are weary of me, and therefore I take the liberty to withdraw; and on account of the great benefit you have done my highly respected master, I shall remain my whole life your most obedient servant, Martin Krumm, legally appointed bailiff of this noble domain.

Trav. Well, go, go.

Krumm. Remember what I have told you of the Jews. They are all wicked, thieving people.

Scene III.—*The* Traveller.

Trav. Perhaps this fellow, however stupid he is, or pretends to be, is a more wicked rascal than there ever was among the Jews. If a Jew cheats, at least seven times out of nine he has been driven to it by a Christian. I doubt whether many Christians can boast of having dealt uprightly with a Jew, and they are surprised if he endeavours to render like for like. If good faith and honesty are to prevail between two different races, both must contribute equal shares. But how if the one considers it a point of religion and almost a meritorious work to persecute the other? Yet——

Scene IV.—*The* Traveller, Christoph.

Trav. Whenever one wants you, one always has to search an hour for you.

CHRIS. You are joking, master. I can only be in one place at one time, can I? Is it my fault that you did not go to that place? Surely you'll find me always where I am.

TRAV. Indeed? And you are staggering too. I comprehend now why you are so witty. Must you get drunk at this time of the morning?

CHRIS. Drunk, indeed? I have hardly begun drinking. Except a couple of bottles of good country wine, a couple of glasses of gin, and a mouthful of bread, on the faith of an honest man, I have not taken anything at all. I have not broken my fast yet.

TRAV. Oh, that is evident enough, and I advise you, as a friend, to double your allowance.

CHRIS. Excellent advice! I shall not neglect to regard it, as in duty bound, as a command. I go, and you shall see how obedient I can be.

TRAV. Be prudent. You had better go and saddle the horses, and pack up our things. I wish to depart this very morning.

CHRIS. If you advised me in joke to take a double breakfast, how can I imagine that you now speak in earnest? You seem to wish to make merry with me today. Perhaps the young lady causes you to be so humorous? Oh, she is a charming girl, only she ought to be a little older, a very little older, ought not she, master? When ladies have not attained a certain maturity——

TRAV. Go and do as I ordered you.

CHRIS. You grow serious now. Nevertheless I'll wait for a third command. The point is of too much importance. You might have been too hasty, and I have always been accustomed to allow my masters time for consideration. Consider well before you quit a place so soon again, where we are living in clover. We arrived only yesterday, we have infinitely obliged our host, and yet have hardly enjoyed a supper and a breakfast with him.

TRAV. Your impudence is insufferable. When a man resolves to go into service, he ought to accustom himself to be more tractable.

CHRIS. Good, sir. You begin to moralize; that is, you are getting angry. Calm yourself, I am going——

Trav. You must be little accustomed to reflect. The service we have rendered to our host loses the name of a benefit as soon as we seem to expect the least reward. I ought not even to have allowed him to bring me here with him. The pleasure of having assisted a stranger without any ulterior design, is in itself very great. And he himself would have wished us more blessings than the excessive thanks he renders us now. The man whom we put under the obligation to thank us at some length and cost, renders us a counter-service which is perhaps more troublesome to him than our good action was to us. Most men are too corrupt not to feel the presence of a benefactor burdensome to them. It seems to humble their pride.

Chris. Your philosophy, sir, deprives you of breath. Well, you shall see that I am as magnanimous as you. I go: in a quarter of an hour you shall be able to mount.

Scene V.—*The* Traveller, *the* Young Lady.

Trav. Little as I have deserved it of this fellow, he yet treats me but very rudely.

Lady. Why do you keep away from us, sir? Why are you here alone? Has our society already become distasteful to you in the few hours you have spent here? I should be very sorry for that. I endeavour to please everyone, and above all others I should like to please you.

Trav. Pardon me, madam, I have merely been ordering my servant to get everything ready for our departure.

Lady. What do you say? For your departure; when did you arrive? If, after a twelvemonth, a melancholy hour had suggested such an idea to you, it might be pardoned. But now? You won't stay a single day; that is too bad. I tell you I shall be angry if you think of it again.

Trav. You could use no threat that would affect me more deeply.

Lady. Indeed! Do you mean that? Would you really be affected if I grew angry with you?

Trav. Who could remain indifferent to the anger of an amiable young lady?

Lady. What you say sounds almost as if you meant to laugh at me; but I will accept it in earnest, even

though I may make a mistake in doing so. Therefore, sir —I am tolerably amiable, I am told—I tell you once more I shall be very angry, dreadfully angry, if you think again of your departure between now and the new year.

TRAV. The time is fixed with much consideration. In the midst of winter then, and the roughest weather, you would show me the door.

LADY. Indeed, who said that? I only said, you might then perhaps think again of your departure for decorum's sake. But we shall not on that account allow you to go then; we will entreat you——

TRAV. Perhaps also for decorum's sake?

LADY. Ah! one would not have believed that so honest a face could also ridicule . . . . But my papa is coming. I must go. Don't tell him I have been with you, please! He reproaches me often enough with being fond of gentlemen's society.

SCENE VI.—*The* BARON, *the* TRAVELLER.

BARON. Was not my daughter with you? Why does the wild child run off?

TRAV. To possess such an amiable and so merry a daughter is an inestimable fortune. She enchants one by her conversation, which is full of the sweetest innocence and most unaffected wit.

BARON. You judge her too favourably. She has been little into society, and possesses but in small degree the art of pleasing—an art which can hardly be acquired in the country, yet which is often more powerful than Beauty herself. Untrammelled Nature alone has been her tutor.

TRAV. And this, but seldom met with in towns, is so much the more fascinating. There everything is feigned, forced, and acquired. Indeed, we have made such progress in this direction, that to be stupid, to be uncouth, and to be natural, are considered as phrases of the same meaning.

BARON. What could be more agreeable to me than to find that our thoughts and opinions harmonize so well? Would that I had had long ago a friend like you!

TRAV. You are unjust towards your other friends.

BARON. Towards my other friends, do you say? I am

fifty years of age . . . . acquaintances I have had, but no friends. And friendship never appeared to me in so charming a garb, as during the few hours in which I have been endeavouring to obtain yours. How can I merit it?

Trav. My friendship is of so little importance, that the mere wish for it is a sufficient merit for obtaining it. Your request is of far more value than that which you request.

Baron. Oh, sir! the friendship of a benefactor——

Trav. Excuse me . . . . is no friendship. If you look at me in this false aspect, I cannot be your friend. Suppose, for a moment, I were your benefactor; should I not have to fear that your friendship was nothing but gratitude?

Baron. But could not the two be united?

Trav. Hardly. A noble mind considers gratitude its duty; friendship requires voluntary emotions of the soul alone.

Baron. But how ought I . . . . Your nice distinctions confuse me entirely.

Trav. Only esteem me no more than I deserve. At most I am a man, who has done his duty with pleasure. Duty itself does not deserve gratitude. But for having done it with pleasure, I am sufficiently rewarded by your friendship.

Baron. This magnanimity only confuses me the more. But I am, perhaps, too bold. I have not dared as yet to inquire your name, your rank. Perhaps I offer my friendship to a man who . . . . who, if he despises it, is——

Trav. Pardon me, sir. You . . . . you make . . . . you think too highly of me.

Baron (*aside*). Shall I ask him? He might feel offended at my curiosity.

Trav. (*aside*). If he asks me, what shall I answer him?

Baron (*aside*). If I do not ask him, he may consider it rudeness.

Trav. (*aside*). Shall I tell him the truth?

Baron (*aside*). But I will take the safest way. I'll first make inquiries of his servant.

Trav. (*aside*). How car I get out of this perplexity?

Baron. Why so thoughtful?

Trav. I was just going to put the same question to you.

Baron. I know now and then we forget ourselves. Let us speak of something else. Do you know that they were really Jews who attacked me? Just now my bailiff told me, that some days ago he met three of them on the high road. According to his description they must have looked more like rogues than honest people. And why should I doubt it? People so intent on gain care little whether they make money by fair means or foul—by cunning or force. They seem to be born for commerce, or, to speak more plainly, for cheating. Politeness, liberality, enterprise, discretion, are qualities that would render this people estimable, if they did not use them entirely to our disadvantage. (*He pauses a moment.*) The Jews have already been to me a source of no small mischief and vexation. When I was still in military service, I was persuaded to sign a bill in favour of one of my acquaintances, and the Jew on whom it was drawn not only made me pay the bill, but pay it twice. Oh! they are the most wicked, the most base people! What do you say? You seem cast down.

Trav. What shall I say? I must confess I have often heard similar complaints.

Baron. And is it not true, their countenance has something that prejudices one against them? It seems to me as if one could read in their eyes their maliciousness, unscrupulousness, selfishness of character, their deceit and perjury. But why do you turn away from me?

Trav. I hear you are very learned in physiognomies; I am afraid, sir, that mine——

Baron. Oh, you wrong me! How could you entertain such a suspicion? Without being learned in physiognomies, I must tell you, I have never met with a more frank, generous, and pleasing countenance than yours.

Trav. To tell you the truth, I do not approve of generalizations concerning a whole people. You will not feel offended at my liberty. I should think among all nations good and wicked are to be found. And among the Jews——

Scene VII.—*The* Young Lady, *the* Traveller, *the* Baron.

Lady. Oh, papa!

Baron. Well, wild puss? Why did you run away from me? What was that for?

Lady. I did not run away from you, papa; but from your scoldings.

Baron. The difference is very subtle. But what was it that deserved a scolding?

Lady. Oh! you know. You saw it. I was with the gentleman——

Baron. Well? And——

Lady. And the gentleman is a man; and with men, you have told me, I must not have too much to do.

Baron. You ought to have seen that this gentleman is an exception. I could wish that he liked you. It will always give me pleasure to see you in his society.

Lady. Oh, it will have been the first and the last time, I suppose. His servant is packing up. And that is what I came to tell you.

Baron. What! Who? His servant?

Trav. Yes, sir; I ordered him to do so. My business, and the fear of causing you any trouble——

Baron. What in the world shall I think of this? Shall I not have the happiness of proving to you that in me you have obliged a grateful heart? Oh! I entreat you to add to your benefit another, which will be not less estimable than the preservation of my life—remain with me a little time; for a few days, at any rate. I would never forgive myself, if I allowed a man like you to leave me unknown, unhonoured, unrewarded, when it lay in my power to act otherwise. I have invited some of my relations to spend the day with us, to share my joy with them, and to give them the good fortune of becoming acquainted with my guardian angel.

Trav. Sir, I am forced——

Lady. To stay, sir! To stay! I will run to tell your servant to unpack again . . . . But there he is.

SCENE VIII.—CHRISTOPH (*booted and spurred, with two portmanteaux under his arm*), *the* YOUNG LADY, *the* TRAVELLER, *the* BARON.

CHRIS. Well, sir, everything is ready. Make haste; shorten your farewell ceremonies a little. Of what use is so much talking, if we cannot stay?

BARON. What prevents you, then, from staying?

CHRIS. Certain considerations, my Lord Baron, founded on the obstinacy of my master, but for which his magnanimity is the pretext.

TRAV. My servant is sometimes rather silly; pardon him. But I see that your entreaties are indeed more than mere compliments. I submit, lest, from fear of being rude, I should commit a rudeness.

BARON. Oh, how grateful I am to you!

TRAV. You may go and unsaddle; we'll not depart until to-morrow.

LADY. Well, don't you hear? Why are you standing there? You are to go and unsaddle.

CHRIS. By rights I ought to be angry; and I feel almost as if my wrath would break out. Yet since nothing worse follows than to remain here to eat and drink and be well treated, we'll let it pass. Otherwise, I am not at all fond of being troubled unnecessarily; you know that.

TRAV. Silence! you are too insolent.

CHRIS. Because I tell the truth.

LADY. Oh, how charming, that you will stay with us! Now I like you twice as well. Come, I will show you our garden; you will like it.

TRAV. If it will please you, it will certainly please me.

LADY. Come, then, until dinner is ready. Papa, you permit us, don't you?

BARON. I will even accompany you.

LADY. No, no! we will not trouble you to do that; you have plenty to do.

BARON. I have now no more important business than to please my guest.

LADY. He will not be offended—would you, sir? (*Whispering.*) Say no, do. I should like to go alone with you.

Trav. I should repent of having given my consent to stay so easily, if I should occasion you the least trouble. I therefore beg——

Baron. Oh! why do you take any notice of the child's words?

Lady. Child! Papa! Don't make me blush. The gentleman will imagine me ever so young. Don't mind him; I am old enough to go for a walk with you. Come. But just look, your servant is still standing there with the portmanteaux under his arm.

Chris. I should think that only concerned him who had to carry them.

Trav. Hold your tongue! People show you too much consideration.

Scene IX.—Lisette, Christoph, *the* Young Lady, *the* Traveller, *the* Baron.

Baron (*perceiving* Lisette *coming*). Sir, I shall follow you immediately, if you will be pleased to conduct my daughter to the garden.

Lady. Oh, stay as long as you please. We shall amuse ourselves. Come. (*Exeunt the* Young Lady *and the* Traveller.)

Baron. Lisette, I have something to say to you.

Lis. Well?

Baron (*whispering*). I don't know yet who our guest is. For certain reasons I don't like to ask him. Could not you learn from his servant?

Lis. Oh! I know what you want. My own curiosity has already urged me to do that, and I have come here for that very reason.

Baron. Well, try your best and let me know. You will earn my thanks.

Lis. All right; go now.

Chris. You will not be offended then, sir, that we are pleased to stay. But don't inconvenience yourself at all on my account, I beg. I am contented with everything.

Baron. Lisette, I leave him under your care. Let him want for nothing. (*Exit.*)

Chris. I recommend myself then to your care, mademoiselle, you who are to let me want for nothing. (*Is going.*)

Scene X.—Lisette, Christoph.

Lis. (*stopping him*). No, sir, I cannot allow you to be so impolite. Am I not woman enough to be worthy of a little conversation?

Chris. The deuce, mistress, you take things too literally. Whether you are woman enough, or perhaps too much, I cannot say. But judging from your loquacity I should almost affirm the latter. But be that as it may, I hope you will dismiss me now; you see my hands and arms are full. As soon as I am hungry or thirsty I'll come to you.

Lis. Our watchman does the same.

Chris. The deuce! He must be a clever fellow, if he does as I do.

Lis. If you would like to make his acquaintance, he is chained up in the back-yard.

Chris. The devil! I verily believe you mean the dog. I see, you thought I meant bodily hunger and thirst; but that was not what I meant. I spoke of the hunger and thirst of love. That, mistress, that. Are you satisfied with my explanation?

Lis. Better than with what it explains.

Chris. Now, in confidence; do you mean to imply by that, that a declaration of love from me would not be disagreeable to you?

Lis. Perhaps. Will you make me one? Seriously?

Chris. Perhaps.

Lis. Ugh! What an answer! "Perhaps!"

Chris. And yet there was not a hair's-breadth difference between yours and mine.

Lis. But from my mouth it means something quite different. A woman's greatest pledge is "perhaps." For however bad our cards may be, we must never allow anyone to see them.

Chris. Well, if that's the case! But let's come to business. (*He throws the two portmanteaux on the ground.*) I don't know why I troubled myself so long. There they lie . . . . I love you, mistress.

Lis. I call that saying much in a few words. We'll dissect it.

Chris. No, we'll rather leave whole. But, that we may acquaint each other with our thoughts at leisure, be good enough to take a seat. Standing fatigues me. Make no ceremony. (*Makes her sit upon the portmanteau.*) I love you, mistress.

Lis. But . . . . my seat is desperately hard. I believe there are books in it.

Chris. Yes; full of wit and tenderness, and nevertheless you consider it a hard seat. That is my master's travelling library. It consists of comedies moving to tears, and tragedies moving to laughter; of tender epics, and philosophic drinking songs, and I don't know what more novelties. But we'll change. Take my seat; make no ceremony; mine is the softest.

Lis. Pardon me, I will not be so rude.

Chris. Make no ceremony, no compliments. Well, if you won't go, I shall carry you.

Lis. Well, if you order it. (*Is going to change her seat.*)

Chris. Order! Good gracious, no! Order means a great deal. If you mean to take it so, you had better keep your seat. (*He sits down again.*)

Lis. (*aside*). The uncivil brute! But no matter.

Chris. Well, where did we stop? Yes! I have it; we stopped at love. I love you, then, mistress. *Je vous aime*, I should say if you were a French marquise.

Lis. The deuce! Are you a Frenchman, then?

Chris. No, I must confess, to my own disgrace, I am only a German. But I had the good luck to be able to associate with some French gentlemen, from whom I have learned how an honest fellow ought to behave. I think, too, that one can see it in me at a glance.

Lis. You have come then from France, with your master?

Chris. Oh, no!

Lis. Where from, then? Perhaps——

Chris. It is some miles further than France, where we come from.

Lis. Not from Italy?

Chris. Not very far from there.

Lis. From England, then?

Chris. Almost. England is a province of the country. Our home is more than two hundred miles from here. But

by Jove! my horses; the poor beasts are still in their harness. Pardon me, mistress. Quick! get up! (*He takes the portmanteaux under his arm.*) In spite of my fervent love I must go, and first attend to what is necessary. We have yet the whole day before us, and, what's better still, the whole night. I see we shall get on together. I shall know where to find you again.

Scene XI.—Martin Krumm, Lisette.

Lis. I shall not get much information from him. He is either too stupid, or too cunning; and neither quality is easy to fathom.

Krumm. Ah, Miss Lisette! So that is the fellow who is to cut me out.

Lis. There was no need for him to do that.

Krumm. No need? And I was fancying how firmly I was rooted in your heart.

Lis. Of course, Herr Bailiff, you were fancying. People like yourself have the right to fancy absurdities. So I am not at all angry that you thought so, but that you have told me of it. I should like to know what you have to do with my heart? With what kindness, with what presents have you acquired a right to it? We don't give away our hearts so recklessly in these days. And do you think I am in distress about mine? I do not doubt I shall find an honest man for it, before I cast it to the swine.

Krumm. The devil! that is a tweak for my nose. I must take a pinch of snuff; perhaps it will go off again with the sneezing. (*He pulls the stolen snuff-box out of his pocket, plays a little with it, and at last takes a pinch in a grandiose fashion.*)

Lis. (*giving a sidelong glance at him*). Confound it! Where has the fellow got that snuff-box?

Krumm. Will you take a pinch?

Lis. Oh! your most obedient servant, Herr Bailiff. (*She takes a pinch.*)

Krumm. What power a silver snuff-box has! Could an earwig be more pliant?

Lis. Is it a silver snuff-box?

Krumm. Were it not a silver one, Martin Krumm would not have it.

Lis. May I look at it?

Krumm. Yes; but only in my hands.

Lis. The shape is excellent.

Krumm. Yes; it weighs full five ounces.

Lis. If it was only for the shape, I should like to have such a box.

Krumm. When I have it melted, the shape will be at your service.

Lis. You are much too kind, sir. Without doubt it is a present?

Krumm. Yes, it did not cost me a farthing.

Lis. Indeed, such a present might easily dazzle a woman. You can make your fortune with it, Herr Bailiff. I at least should defend myself very badly if I were attacked with silver boxes. With such a box a sweetheart might easily win his game.

Krumm. I understand. I understand.

Lis. As it costs you nothing, I should advise you, Herr Bailiff, to make a good friend by it.

Krumm. I see. I see.

Lis. (*insinuatingly*). Would not you give it to me?

Krumm. Oh, I beg your pardon. One does not give away silver snuff-boxes so recklessly in these days. And do you think, Miss Lisette, that I am in distress about mine? I do not doubt I shall meet with an honest man for it, before I cast it to the swine.

Lis. Has anyone ever heard such stupid impertinence? To compare a heart with a snuff-box!

Krumm. Yes, a stony heart with a silver snuff-box.

Lis. It might perhaps cease to be stony if . . . . But all my talking is in vain. You are not worthy of my love. What a kind-hearted fool I am! (*Begins to cry.*) I had almost believed the bailiff was one of those honest people who mean what they say.

Krumm. And what a kind-hearted fool I am to believe that a woman means what she says! There, my Lizzy, don't cry. (*Gives her the snuff-box.*) But now I hope I am worthy of your love. To begin with, I ask nothing but a

kiss on your beautiful hand. (*He kisses her hand.*) Ah! how sweet!

SCENE XII.—*The* YOUNG LADY, LISETTE, MARTIN KRUMM.

LADY (*softly approaching pushes down his head on to* LISETTE'S *hand*). Indeed, Herr Bailiff! Come, kiss my hand also.

LIS. Botheration!

KRUMM. With all my heart, madam. (*Is going to kiss her hand.*)

LADY (*gives him a box on his ear*). You stupid clown, don't you understand a joke?

KRUMM. The devil! 'Tis a queer way of joking.

LIS. (*laughing*). Ha! ha! ha! Oh, how I pity you, my dear bailiff! Ha! ha! ha!

KRUMM. What, you are laughing, too, are you! Is that my reward? Very well, very well. (*Exit.*)

LIS. Ha! ha! ha!

SCENE XIII.—LISETTE, *the* YOUNG LADY.

LADY. I never would have believed it, Lisette, if I had not seen it myself. You allow yourself to be kissed—and by the bailiff?

LIS. I don't know what right you have to spy on me? I thought you had gone for a walk with the stranger in the garden.

LADY. Yes; and I should be with him still, if my papa had not joined us; and then I could not speak a single reasonable word with him. My papa is much too serious.

LIS. What do you call a reasonable word? And what can you have to tell him, that your papa must not hear?

LADY. A thousand things. But I shall be angry if you ask any more questions. Let it suffice; I like the strange gentleman. That I may be permitted to confess, I suppose.

LIS. You would quarrel dreadfully with your papa, I suppose, if he were to choose such a husband for you some day? But, joking aside, who knows what he

intends to do? What a pity you are not a few years older! Things might soon be settled then.

Lady. Oh, if my age is the only obstacle, papa can make me a few years older, and I certainly shall not contradict him.

Lis. No; I know of a better way. I'll give you a few of my years, and that will serve us both. I shall no longer be too old, nor you too young.

Lady. That is true; that will do.

Lis. See! the stranger's servant is coming here. I must speak to him. It is all for your good. Will you leave me alone with him? Go now.

Lady. Yes; but don't forget about the years. Do you hear, Lisette?

Scene XIV.—Lisette, Christoph.

Lis. You must be either hungry or thirsty, sir, that you come again already? Eh?

Chris. Yes, indeed. But mind how I have explained hunger and thirst. To tell you the truth, my dear young woman, as soon as I dismounted yesterday, I cast my eye on you. But thinking to remain here only a few hours, I thought it would not be worth while to make your acquaintance. What could we have done in so short a time? We should have had to begin our novel at the wrong end. And it is not safe to pull the cat out of the stove by the tail.

Lis. True enough; but now we can proceed more according to rule. You can make a proposal; I can reply to it. I can raise scruples; you can overcome them. We may deliberate at each step, and need not sell one another a pig in a poke. If you had made me your offer yesterday at once, I must confess, I should have accepted it. But only fancy how much I should have staked, if I had had no time to inquire about your rank, fortune, country, employments, and such like.

Chris. The deuce! But would that have been necessary? Such a fuss! You could not make much more, if you were going to be married.

Lis. Oh! if it had been a mere marriage, it would be

ridiculous to be so conscientious on my part. But a love affair is quite another thing. The least trifle is of the greatest importance. And therefore don't fancy that you will obtain the least favour from me, if you do not satisfy my curiosity in every respect.

CHRIS. Well; and how far does it go?

LIS. Since a servant is best judged by his master, before anything else I wish to know——

CHRIS. Who my master is? Ha! ha! that's good. You ask me a question which I should like to ask you, if I thought you knew more about it than I did.

LIS. And do you really think to get off with this miserable subterfuge? In short, I must know who your master is, or there's an end to our friendship.

CHRIS. I have not known my master longer than four weeks. So long it is, since I entered his service at Hamburg. I have come with him from that place, but have never taken the trouble to inquire for his rank or name. But so much is quite certain; he must be rich, for he has not let either himself or me want for anything on our journey. And why should I care about anything else?

LIS. What can I hope from your love, if you won't even trust such a trifle to my discretion? I should never treat you in such a way. For example, you see this handsome silver snuff-box——

CHRIS. Really! Well?

LIS. You only need to beg me, and I'll tell you from whom I have got it.

CHRIS. Oh, that is not of much consequence to me. I'd rather know who is to get it from you.

LIS. I have not exactly settled that point yet. But if you don't get it, it will be no one's fault but your own. I certainly should not leave your openness unrewarded.

CHRIS. Or rather my loquacity. But as I am an honest fellow, if I am silent now, it is from necessity, for, indeed, I don't know what I can tell you. Confound it! How willingly I would pour out my secrets if I only had any!

LIS. Good-bye! I'll not assail your virtue any longer. But I wish it may help you soon to a silver snuff-box and a sweetheart, as it has now deprived you of them. (*Is going.*)

CHRIS. Come, come; patience! (*Aside.*) I see I must

tell a lie, for I really cannot let such a present escape. Besides, what harm can it do?

Lis. Well, will you explain yourself more frankly? But I see. You do not like it. No, no, I don't want to know anything——

Chris. Yes, yes; you shall know everything! (*Aside.*) What would I not give to be able to tell lies. (*Aloud.*) Well, listen, then! My master .... is a nobleman. He comes —we come together—from Holland. He was obliged, on account of some vexations—a trifle—a murder—to run for it.

Lis. What! on account of a murder?

Chris. Yes. But it was an honourable murder—was obliged to escape in consequence of a duel—and just now he is flying——

Lis. And you, my friend?

Chris. I am also flying. The dead one—I mean to say, the friends of the dead one—are prosecuting us, and on account of this prosecution .... But the rest you can easily guess .... What the deuce can one do? Consider for yourself: a saucy young monkey—called us names! My master knocked him down. How could it be otherwise? If anyone calls me names, I do the same, or—I give him a good box on the ear. An honest fellow must not put up with such things.

Lis. Bravo! I like people of that sort; for I am a little hasty myself. But see, there's your master coming. Would anyone believe, from his countenance, that he was so fierce and cruel?

Chris. Come, come; let us get out of his way. He might perhaps see that I have betrayed him.

Lis. Just as you please.

Chris. But the silver snuff-box——

Lis. Come on. (*Aside.*) I must first see what I shall get from my master for the secret I have discovered; if that is worth something, he may have the box.

Scene XV.—*The* Traveller.

Trav. I miss my box. It is a trifle, yet the loss of it would grieve me. Could the bailiff, perhaps .... But no,

I have lost it; I may have pulled it out of my pocket unawares. We ought not to injure anyone even by suspicion. Nevertheless—he pressed close up to me—he snatched at my watch .... I caught him at it .... Might he not have snatched at the box without my having caught him?

SCENE XVI.—MARTIN KRUMM, *the* TRAVELLER.

KRUMM (*perceiving the stranger, is about to retire*). Holloa!

TRAV. Well, well, my friend, approach. (*Aside.*) He is as shy as if he knew my thoughts! Well? come nearer!

KRUMM (*defiantly*). I have no time. I know well you wish to chat with me. I have more important business to attend to. I don't wish to hear your heroic deeds for the tenth time. Relate them to somebody else, who has not heard them yet.

TRAV. What do I hear! Just now the bailiff was simple and polite, now he is insolent and rude. Which is your true mask?

KRUMM. Ah! who the deuce taught you to call my face a mask? I don't want to quarrel with you .... otherwise—— (*Is going away.*)

TRAV. (*aside*). His insolent behaviour increases my suspicion. (*Aloud.*) No, no, wait a moment. I have something important to ask you.

KRUMM. And I shall have nothing to reply, however important it may be. Therefore, spare yourself the trouble of asking.

TRAV. I'll venture it. But I should be very sorry if I did him a wrong. My friend, have you not seen my snuff-box? I miss it.

KRUMM. What a question! Is it my fault that some one has stolen it? What do you take me for—the receiver or the thief?

TRAV. Who spoke of theft? You are betraying yourself.

KRUMM. I betray myself? Then you think I have

got it? But do you know, sir, what it is to accuse an honest fellow of such things? Do you know that?

Trav. Why shout so loud? I have not yet accused you of anything. You are your own accuser. Besides, I don't know whether I should be greatly in the wrong. Who was it whom I caught snatching at my watch?

Krumm. Oh! you are a man who can't understand a joke. Listen. (*Aside.*) Suppose he has seen it in Lisette's possession? But the girl has surely not been so foolish as to boast of it.

Trav. Oh, I understand your way of joking so well, that I almost believe you would like to joke with my box also. But if one carries a joke too far, it at last becomes earnest. I should be sorry for your reputation. Suppose I was convinced you had had no evil intentions, would other people too——

Krumm. Oh! other people . . . . other people would have long ago been weary of being charged with things of this sort. But if you think I have got it, search me, examine me.

Trav. That is not my business. Besides, one does not carry everything in one's pocket.

Krumm. Very well; but that you may see I am an honest fellow, I'll turn out my pockets myself. Look! (*Aside.*) The devil must have a hand in the game if it should tumble out.

Trav. Oh, don't trouble yourself.

Krumm. No, no! you shall see, you shall see. (*He turns one of his pockets inside out.*) Is there a box there? Crumbs of bread are in it; that precious food. (*He turns out another.*) There is nothing here either. But stop, a bit of a calendar; I keep it on account of the verses written above the months. They are very amusing. Well, to proceed. Attend now. I'll turn out the third. (*In turning it out, two large beards fall out.*) The devil! what is that? (*He stoops hastily to pick them up, but the traveller is quicker, and snatches one of them.*)

Trav. What is the meaning of these things?

Krumm (*aside*). Cursed fate! I thought I had put them away long ago.

TRAV. Why, this is a beard. (*He puts it to his face.*) Do I look like a Jew now?

KRUMM. Give it back to me. Give it back. Who knows what you may be fancying? I sometimes frighten my little boy with it. That is what it is for.

TRAV. You will be kind enough to leave it me. I will also frighten some one with it.

KRUMM. Don't let us quarrel; I must have it back. (*Tries to snatch it from his hand.*)

TRAV. Go, or——

KRUMM (*aside*). The devil! 'Tis time now to look out where the carpenter has left a hole. (*Aloud.*) All right, sir, all right. I see you came here to bring me ill-luck. But may all the devils take me if I am not an honest man! I should like to see the man who can say anything bad of me! Bear that in mind. Whatever may come of it, I can swear I have not used that beard for any evil purpose! (*Exit.*)

SCENE XVII.—*The* TRAVELLER.

TRAV. This man himself raises suspicions in me which are very prejudicial to himself. Might he not be one of the disguised robbers? But I will follow out my supposition cautiously.

SCENE XVIII.—*The* BARON, *the* TRAVELLER.

TRAV. Would you not think I had been fighting yesterday with the Jewish robbers and I had torn out one of their beards? (*He shows him the beard.*)

BARON. What do you mean, sir?—But why did you leave me so hastily?

TRAV. Pardon my want of politeness. I intended to be with you again immediately. I only went to look for my snuff-box, which I must have lost somewhere here.

BARON. I am really sorry for that. Should you, after all, have suffered a loss in my house——

TRAV. The loss would not be so very great. But pray just look at this curious beard.

BARON. You showed it to me before. Why?

TRAV. I will explain myself more intelligibly. I believe .... But no, I will keep my supposition to myself.

Baron. Your supposition? Explain yourself!

Trav. No, I have been too hasty. I might be mistaken.

Baron. You make me uneasy.

Trav. What do you think of your bailiff?

Baron. No, no, we won't turn the conversation. I conjure you, by the benefit you have rendered me, to explain to me what you think, what you suppose, and in what you might be mistaken?

Trav. A reply to my question alone can induce me to acquaint you with the whole matter.

Baron. What do I think of my bailiff? Well, I consider him a thoroughly honest and upright man.

Trav. Then forget that I had anything to tell you.

Baron. A beard—suppositions—the bailiff . . . . How shall I connect these things? Are my entreaties of no avail? You might be mistaken. Suppose you are mistaken, what risk do you run with a friend?

Trav. You press me too hard. I tell you then, that your bailiff incautiously dropped this beard; that he had another, which he hastily put back again in his pocket; that his language betrays a man who thinks that people believe as much evil of him as he is capable of doing; that I also have caught him in an attempt not very conscientious, or at least not very prudent.

Baron. It seems as if my eyes were suddenly opened I am afraid you will not be mistaken. And you hesitated to inform me of it? I shall go at once, and try all means in my power to discover the truth. Am I to harbour murderers in my own house?

Trav. But do not be angry with me, if you should happily find my supposition to be false. You forced it from me, otherwise I should have kept it secret.

Baron. True or false, I shall always be grateful to you

Scene XIX.—*The* Traveller. *Afterwards* Christoph.

Trav. I hope he will not proceed too hastily with him; for however well-founded the suspicion is, the man may nevertheless be innocent. I am very uneasy . . . . Indeed, it is no trifle to cause a master to suspect his

servants. Even if he finds them to be innocent, yet he loses his confidence in them for ever. Certainly, when I consider the matter more fully, I feel I ought to have been silent. And when they hear that I have ascribed my loss to him, will they not conclude that selfishness and revenge are the causes of my suspicion? I would willingly give a good deal to postpone the investigation.

CHRIS. (*approaches laughing*). Ha! ha! ha! Do you know, sir, who you are?

TRAV. Do you know that you are a fool? What do you want?

CHRIS. Well, if you don't know it, I will tell you. You are a nobleman; you come from Holland, where you got into a scrape and fought a duel; you were so fortunate as to kill a young monkey of a fellow; the friends of the dead man have pursued you hotly; you have taken to flight; I have the honour of accompanying you on your flight.

TRAV. Are you dreaming, or are you mad?

CHRIS. Neither the one nor the other; since for a madman my discourse would be too reasonable, and for a dreamer too mad.

TRAV. Who has imposed upon you with such nonsense?

CHRIS. Oh, you may rest assured that no one imposes upon me. But don't you think it is cleverly invented in the short time they left me for lying? I'm sure I could not have hit upon anything better. So now at least you are secured against further curiosity.

TRAV. But what am I to make of all this?

CHRIS. No more than you please! Leave the remainder to me. Just listen how it happened. I was asked for your name, rank, fatherland, occupations; I did not let them ask twice. I told all I knew; that is, that I knew nothing at all. You can easily understand that this news was hardly sufficient, and that they had little cause to be contented with it. So they pressed me, but in vain; I kept silent, because I had nothing to keep silent about. But at last the offer of a present induced me to tell more than I knew; that is, I told a lie.

TRAV. You scoundrel! I see what excellent hands I am in.

Chris. What! I hope I have not accidentally lied the truth?

Trav. You impudent liar! you have placed me in an embarrassment out of which——

Chris. Out of which you can extricate yourself as soon as you like to make further use of the nice epithet you just now were pleased to bestow on me.

Trav. But I shall then be obliged to disclose myself?

Chris. So much the better; then I too shall learn who you are. But judge for yourself whether, with a good conscience, I could have been conscientious in regard to this lie? (*He pulls out the snuff-box.*) Look at this box! Could I have earned it more easily?

Trav. Let me look at it. (*He takes it into his hand.*) What do I see?

Chris. Ha! ha! ha! I thought you would be astonished. Why, I am sure, if you could earn such a box, you would not mind telling a lie or two yourself.

Trav. So you have robbed me of it?

Chris. How? What?

Trav. Your faithlessness vexes me less than the overhasty suspicion which I have cast upon an honest man on account of this box. And you can still be so insanely impudent as to want to persuade me that it was a present, obtained, however, hardly less disgracefully. Go! And never come into my presence again.

Chris. Are you dreaming, or are . . . . But out of respect for you I will not say it. Surely envy cannot have led you to such extravagances? Do you mean to say this box is yours, and I have robbed you of it, *salva venia?* If it were so, I should be a stupid devil to boast of it in your very presence. Well, there is Lisette coming. Quick, come here! Help me to bring my master back to his senses.

Scene XX.—Lisette, *the* Traveller, Christoph.

Lis. Oh, sir, what troubles you are making among us! What harm has our bailiff done to you? You have made our master furious with him. They are talking of beards,

and snuff-boxes, and robberies; the bailiff is crying and swearing that he is innocent, and that you say what is not true. Our master is not to be softened; and, indeed, he has now sent for the magistrate and the police to put the bailiff in irons. What is the meaning of it all?

CHRIS. Oh, all that is nothing at all! Only listen, listen what he intends to do with me.

TRAV. Yes, indeed, my dear Lisette. I have been too hasty. The bailiff is innocent. It is my wicked servant alone who has brought me into this trouble. It is he who has stolen my box, on account of which I suspected the bailiff, and the beard may certainly have been for the children, as he said. I will go and give him satisfaction; I will confess my mistake. I will do whatever he may request.

CHRIS. No, no, stop; you must first give me satisfaction. In the devil's name, Lisette, why don't you speak? Tell him how it is. I wish that you and your box were both at the dickens! Am I to be called a thief for it? Did you not give it to me?

LIS. Yes, indeed, and I don't want it back again.

TRAV. What? It is true, then? But the box is mine.

LIS. Yours? I did not know that.

TRAV. And you found it? And my negligence is to blame for all this disturbance. (*To* CHRISTOPH.) I have wronged you also;—pardon me! I am ashamed of my hastiness.

LIS. (*aside*). The deuce! Now I begin to see. I don't think he has been over-hasty, either.

TRAV. Come, we will——

SCENE XXI.—*The* BARON, *the* TRAVELLER, LISETTE, CHRISTOPH.

BARON (*in a great hurry*). Lisette, restore the box to the gentleman immediately! All is discovered; he has confessed all. And you were not ashamed to accept presents from such a rascal?—Well, where is the box?

TRAV. Then it is true, after all?

LIS. The gentleman got it back a long time ago. I thought I might take presents at the hands of those from

whom you accepted services. I knew as little of him as you.

Chris. And so my present has gone to the deuce again. Lightly come, lightly go.

Baron. But how can I show my gratitude to you, my dearest friend? You have saved me a second time from an equally great danger. I owe my life to you. Without you I should never have discovered this misfortune that threatened me. My agent, whom I considered the most honest man on my whole property, was the bailiff's accomplice. How then could I ever have imagined it? Had you departed to-day——

Trav. True enough . . . . then the assistance which I thought to have rendered you yesterday would have been very incomplete. I therefore consider myself happy that Heaven has chosen me to make this unlooked-for discovery. I now rejoice as much as I feared before that I might be mistaken.

Baron. I admire your philanthropy as much as your magnanimity. Oh may that be true which Lisette has told me!

Scene XXII.—*The* Young Lady, *the* Baron, *the* Traveller, Lisette, Christoph.

Lis. And why should it not be true?

Baron. Come, my daughter, come. Unite your entreaties with mine: request my preserver to accept your hand, and with your hand my fortune. What more costly gift could my gratitude present him with, than you, whom I love as much as him? Do not wonder that I can make you such an offer! Your servant has disclosed to us who you are. Grant me the inestimable pleasure of showing my gratitude. My fortune is equal to my rank, and this is equal to yours. Here you are safe from your enemies, and come among friends who will adore you.—But you seem depressed. How am I to interpret this?

Lady. Can you be distressed on my account? I assure you I shall obey my papa with pleasure.

Trav. Your magnanimity astonishes me. From the greatness of the reward which you offer me, I now per-

ceive how small was my deed. But what shall I reply to you? My servant has told an untruth, and I——

BARON. Would to Heaven you were not what he says! Would to Heaven your rank were lower than mine! Then the value of my requital would be increased a little, and you would, perhaps, feel less inclined to refuse my entreaty.

TRAV. (*aside*). Why do I not disclose myself? (*Aloud.*) Sir, your nobility of mind touches my soul. Ascribe it to fate and not to me, that your offer is in vain. I am——

BARON. Perhaps married already?

TRAV. No.

BARON. Well? What then?

TRAV. I am a Jew.

BARON. A Jew? Cruel fate!

CHRIS. A Jew?

LIS. A Jew?

LADY. Oh! what does that matter?

LIS. Hush, Miss, hush! I will tell you afterwards what it matters.

BARON. And so there are cases where Heaven itself prevents our being grateful.

TRAV. Your wish to be so renders it superfluous.

BARON. I will at least do all that fate permits me to do. Accept my whole fortune. I would rather be poor and grateful than rich and thankless.

TRAV. This offer, too, I must decline, for the God of my fathers has given me more than I want. For requital I ask but one thing, that you will henceforth judge of my nation in a kinder and less sweeping way. I did not conceal my race from you because I am ashamed of my religion. No! But I saw that you felt friendship for me, and enmity against my nation. And the friendship of a man, whoever he may be, has always been esteemed by me.

BARON. I am ashamed of my conduct.

CHRIS. I am only just coming to myself again, after my surprise. What, you are a Jew, and have been bold enough to take an honest Christian into your service? You ought to have served me. That would have been

right, according to the Bible. By my faith! You have insulted all Christendom in my person. Now I know the reason why the gentleman would eat no pork during our journey, and did a hundred other follies. Don't fancy I shall go with you any further. I shall bring an action against you, too.

Trav. I cannot expect of you that you should think more kindly than other Christian people. I will not remind you from what miserable circumstances I took you at Hamburg: nor will I force you to remain any longer with me. But as I am pretty well satisfied with your services, and have just now suspected you unjustly, you may keep the object that caused my suspicion as a recompense. (*He gives him the box.*) Your wages you shall also have, and now you may go wherever you please.

Chris. Deuce take it! there are Jews too, I suppose, who are no Jews. You are a good fellow. Done! I stay with you. A Christian would have given me a kick in the ribs, and not a snuff-box.

Baron. I am charmed with all I have seen of you. Come, let us take steps to have the guilty ones put in safe custody. Oh, how estimable would the Jews be, were they all like you!

Trav. And how amiable the Christians, if they all possessed your qualities!

(*Exeunt the* Baron, *the* Young Lady, *and the* Traveller.)

Scene XXIII.

Lisette, Christoph.

Lis. And so, my friend, you told me a lie.

Chris. Yes; and for two reasons. Firstly, because I did not know the truth; and secondly, because one cannot tell many truths for a box which one is obliged to give back again.

Lis. And perhaps, if one only knew it, you are a Jew yourself, too, however you may disguise it.

Chris. You are too inquisitive for a young lady. Come along with me.

(*Exeunt arm-in-arm.*)